This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the appliation:

Listing of Claims:

1 (currently amended). A hood-type annealing furnace, especially for steel strip or wire bunches, with an annealing base for receiving the material to be annealed, a protective hood which is placed on the furnace in a gas-tight manner, a radial blower which is held in the annealing base and comprises a blade wheel and a guide apparatus enclosing the blade wheel for circulating a protective gas in the protective hood, a heat exchanger for cooling the protective gas, which heat exchanger is connected on ~~the~~ an input side via a flow conduit with ~~the~~ a pressure side of the radial blower and opens on ~~the~~ an output side in an annular gap between the guide apparatus and the protective hood, and a deflection device which is axially displaceable into the pressure-side flow path of the radial blower for ~~the~~ optional connection to the radial blower of the flow conduit which leads to the heat exchanger, wherein the protective hood ~~(8)~~ is held in a gas-tight manner via an annular flange ~~(9)~~, ~~that~~ the heat exchanger ~~(11)~~ is disposed ~~below~~ beneath the annular flange ~~(9)~~, ~~that~~ the flow conduit ~~(13)~~ consists of an annular conduit ~~(14)~~ starting from ~~the~~ an outer circumference of the guide apparatus ~~(5)~~ and being

concentric to the annular gap ~~(12)~~, and ~~that~~ the deflection device is ~~arranged as~~ an annular deflection slide ~~(18)~~ which encloses the guide apparatus ~~(5)~~ on the outside.

2 (currently amended). A hood-type annealing furnace as claimed in claim 1, wherein the annular conduit ~~(14)~~ and the annular gap ~~(12)~~ are separated from each other by a cylindrical wall ~~(15)~~ which is held in an axially displaceable way and carries the annular deflection slide ~~(18)~~.

3 (currently amended). A hood-type annealing furnace as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ guide blades ~~(6)~~ of the guide apparatus ~~(5) are provided on their outer face side with~~ <u>have</u> recesses ~~(20)~~ for the deflection slide ~~(18)~~ <u>on an outer face side of the guide blades</u>.